

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 612

By Tillis

A RESOLUTION to designate April 27, 2018, as "Don't Text and Drive Day" in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, texting while driving poses a significant risk to drivers and those around them; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the General Assembly enacted Public Chapter 201, which prohibits drivers from operating a motor vehicle while using a wireless device to send text messages; and

WHEREAS, the National Safety Council estimates that over 340,000, or 6 percent, of all car crashes in 2013 involved text messaging; and

WHEREAS, according to the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, texting while driving is six times more likely to result in an accident than driving while intoxicated; and

WHEREAS, in a 2011 study by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 31.2 percent of United States drivers eighteen to sixty-four years of age reported that they had read or sent text or email messages while driving at least once in the past thirty days; and

WHEREAS, sending or receiving a text message takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent, at fifty-five miles per hour, of driving the length of an entire football field, blind; and

WHEREAS, in response to a 2011 University of Tennessee Traffic Safety Culture survey, more than 88 percent of Tennesseans surveyed said that texting while driving is the biggest threat to personal safety; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, text messaging creates a crash risk twenty-three times worse than driving while not distracted; and

WHEREAS, as of December 2013, 153.3 billion text messages were sent in the United States every month, according to CTIA - The Wireless Association; and

WHEREAS, as reported in a 2012 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration survey, at any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010; and

WHEREAS, according to a University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute study, about 25 percent of teenagers respond to a text message once or more every time they drive, and, additionally, 20 percent of teenagers and 10 percent of parents admitted to having an extended multi-message texting conversation while driving. Furthermore, the study reported that parents who more frequently engaged in distracted driving behaviors had teenagers who engaged in distracted driving behaviors more frequently than other young drivers; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we designate April 27, 2018, as "Don't Text and Drive Day" in Tennessee and call upon individuals, government agencies, business leaders, hospitals, schools, and public and private institutions within the State to promote awareness of the problem of texting and driving and to support programs and policies that reduce the incidence of texting while driving in Tennessee and nationwide.